

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

THE LIGHT BEFORE THE DARK: A CHRONOLOGY
OF RUSSIAN EVENTS, FEBRUARY-OCTOBER 1917

DOCUMENT NO. _____
NO CHANGE IN CLASS.
11 DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 10/11
AUTH: NR 7C2
DATE: 15 JAN 1981 REVIEWER: 011922

August 1957

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

THE LIGHT BEFORE THE DARK: A CHRONOLOGY
OF RUSSIAN EVENTS, FEBRUARY-OCTOBER 1917

The Communists of the world will celebrate the 40th anniversary of Communist seizure of power in Russia on 7 November 1957. That day 40 years ago, however, marked more than just a Communist (then Bolshevik) seizure of power; it also marked the extinguishment of the flame of civil liberty and democratic government in Russia, and the passage of the Russian people from the hopeful light of freedom into the dark despair of Communist despotism.

That flame was, admittedly, still in its infancy, but it was struggling vigorously for existence and was daily growing in strength. Had it not been snuffed out by the Bolsheviks on 7 November 1917, the Russian people would very likely today be enjoying the life of free men instead of merely existing as the oppressed subjects of a tyrannical and despotic regime, unparalleled in history, in which all thought and effort are exerted for the well-being of the Communist Party and its members and none for the ordinary citizen.

It is too often forgotten that the Bolshevik Revolution was not directed against the autocratic Tsarist regime which had for centuries oppressed the Russian people (though Tsarist oppression was liberty compared to the oppression imposed by the Communists), but against a democratic government which had freed Russia from Tsarist rule by means of the first 1917 revolution (the February Revolution) and which was laboring to bring the benefits of democracy and liberty to the people. It was this regime which was overthrown by the Bolshevik (i.e., the October) Revolution of 7 November 1917.

The February Revolution was a spontaneous, moderate movement which sought to replace the incompetent and autocratic government of the Tsar with a more effective, representative and progressive liberal regime. During its existence from February to October, this Provisional Government, despite the turmoil of war and the attendant economic and social upheavals and difficulties, as well as the manifold problems inherent in any radical change of government, made great and steady progress towards its goals. The government reflected the deepest desires of the great mass of the Russian people and therefore commanded the cooperation of all the principal political parties then existing-- Socialist, Social Democratic (Menshevik), Social Revolutionary, and Constitutional Democratic (Cadet).

The only party which refused to cooperate with the Provisional Government was the very small, but fanatic, Bolshevik Party. Only the Bolsheviks endeavored to obstruct the efforts of the new regime and to prevent it from functioning effectively. They were not concerned with the welfare of the people but only with securing power for themselves. Therefore, since they themselves had not carried out the February Revolution and did not then control the government, they deprecated it and pretended that it was simply a front for the ruling classes. And since the new regime professed Socialist rather than Marxist ideals and goals, they declared that the interests of the common people were being betrayed.

Using these hypocritical charges as a justification for their obstructionist, conspiratorial, and undermining activities, the Bolsheviks, from the beginning, systematically sabotaged the government and its efforts. For they knew that only by preventing the realization by the government of its liberal program could they create a situation in which they could seize the power they so desperately craved. To this end, the Bolsheviks deliberately sowed discord, suspicion, and mutiny among the people and army. At the same time they presented themselves to the Russian people as the only true protectors of the revolution and endeavored to win support by making wildly extravagant promises (none of which were fulfilled after they seized power).

In particular the Bolsheviks exerted every possible effort (successfully, as it turned out) to capture control of the soviets--workers', peasants', and soldiers' councils--which had sprung up all over Russia. Control of the soviets proved, in fact, to be the basis for the Bolshevik success in October, for the soviets exercised enormous power. The Petrograd Soviet at first and then later the Central Executive Committee of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets exercised power almost as extensive as that held by the Provisional Government itself. There was, in fact, virtually a dual government in Russia.

It cannot be denied that the government, by permitting this sharing of power, helped materially to dig its own grave; but it is also proof that the government was sincere in its efforts to reflect the will of the people and to associate them in the processes of government. Certainly it was a far different situation than that now prevailing in Russia in which the Communist Party exercises a monopoly of political power while the ordinary citizen has no rights but only the duty to obey whatever orders the Party issues.

The above statements can easily be verified, for the truth is revealed by the actions of the Provisional Government during the period of light (February to October) to bring freedom and democracy to Russia, and by the actions of the Bolsheviks during the same period to prevent this from happening, as the attached chronology shows.

March 1917

<u>Date*</u> <u>(Old Style)</u>	<u>Date*</u> <u>(New Style)</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
26 Feb	11 Mar	Tsar orders Duma dissolved	
27 Feb	12 Mar	The February Revolution	
27 Feb	12 Mar	Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies organized in Petrograd	
1 Mar	14 Mar	Petrograd Soviet issues its Order No. 1	
2 Mar	15 Mar	Abdication of Tsar Nicholas on behalf of self and son	
2 Mar	15 Mar	Establishment of Provisional Government under Prince Lvov	

Kerensky, a Socialist, who was also vice-president of the Petrograd Soviet, became Minister of Justice. The Government's first act was to decree civil liberties: general amnesty for all political, religious, and military prisoners; freedom of speech and press, and freedom for strikes and unions; abolition of all social, religious, and national distinctions; pledge to convene a Constituent Assembly; elections to be based on universal suffrage; soldiers to have full civil rights when not on active duty. These measures were hardly those of an autocratic regime, as the Bolsheviks termed the Provisional Government. None of these rights have ever been enjoyed in Russia since the Communists seized power.

* The Julian Calendar, which was 13 days behind the Gregorian Calendar, was used in Russia throughout 1917. The Gregorian Calendar was officially adopted on 1/14 February 1918. For clarity both dates are shown for each event in this chronology.

March 1917

Date (old Style)	Date (New Style)	Event	Comment
3 Mar	16 Mar	Abdication of Grand Duke Michael	This marked the undoubted end of Tsarist rule in Russia although a republic was not formally proclaimed until several months later.
5 Mar	18 Mar	First issue of the Bolshevik organ <u>Pravda</u> .	The first and subsequent issues bitterly attacked the new regime as "a government of capitalists and landlords" and demanded that the Soviets convene a Constituent Assembly to establish a "democratic republic." But when a popularly-elected Constituent Assembly did meet on 5/18 January 1918, the Communist regime under Lenin allowed it to exist for only one day. Never again has Russia known a truly representative assembly.
5 Mar	18 Mar	Molotov, in Petrograd Soviet, unsuccessfully proposes resolution attacking the Provisional Government	Another proof of the truly revolutionary character of the Provisional Government, for a regime representing the traditional ruling classes would never have taken this step.
8 Mar	21 Mar	Tsar Nicholas arrested	
9 Mar	22 Mar	Petrograd Soviet adopts "Bill of Rights of Soldiers"	
10 Mar	23 Mar	Petrograd Bolshevik Committee sets up commission to form Bolshevik organizations	This was the first Bolshevik move towards eventual seizure of power by force.
10-11 Mar	23-24 Mar	Agreement between Petrograd Soviet Executive Committee and Manufacturers' Association	The agreement, which was the first step in reshaping the economic structure of Russia along socialist lines, provided for (1) formation of factory committees; (2) formation on basis of parity between workers and employers of factory and central conciliation boards; and (3) an 8-hour work day.

March 1917

Date (Old Style)	Date (New Style)	Event	Comment
11 Mar	24 Mar	Provisional Government recognized by England, France, and Italy	Recognition had previously been extended on 9/22 March by the United States.
12 Mar	25 Mar	Stalin and Kamenev arrive in Petrograd	A further liberal measure of the new regime.
12 Mar	25 Mar	Provisional Government decrees abolition of death penalty	
14 Mar	27 Mar	Petrograd Soviet issues proclamation asking peace without annexations or indemnities	The government adopted this demand as official policy on 27 March/9 April.
		<u>April 1917</u>	
28 Mar	10 Apr	Bolshevik Party Conference meets in Petrograd	
29 Mar	11 Apr	Government institutes grain monopoly	This was an attempt to solve the war-caused food shortage and to prevent profiteering--another measure to benefit the people, though the Bolsheviks denounced it as dictatorial.
29 Mar-3 Apr	11-16 Apr	All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in Petrograd	This was the highest organ of the Russian common people at the time; it is noteworthy that the Bolsheviks were only a tiny minority in it.
3 Apr	16 Apr	Lenin returns to Russia	
4 Apr	17 Apr	Joint meeting of Social Democrats (Mensheviks and Bolsheviks) in Petrograd	At the meeting Lenin presented his "April Theses" which attacked the government and rejected any cooperation with Socialists. The speech was denounced by all delegates save one.
7 Apr	20 Apr	"April Theses" published by <u>Pravda</u>	

April 1917

<u>Date (Old Style)</u>	<u>Date (New Style)</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
8 Apr	21 Apr	"April Theses" rejected by Bolshevik Petrograd Committee	The vote was 13 to 2, with one abstention. Lenin had not yet persuaded his colleagues that illegal conduct on behalf of the party was preferable to legal conduct on behalf of the nation.
10 Apr	23 Apr	Lenin publishes <u>The Tasks of the Proletariat in our Revolution</u>	In this tract Lenin explicitly endorsed the right of self-determination and of secession. But once the Communists attained power, they ruthlessly suppressed all attempts by non-Russian peoples to exercise these rights, which shows the emptiness of Bolshevik promises during this period of light.
14 Apr	27 Apr	Bolshevik Petrograd District Committee asks immediate formation of Red Guard	This resolution, also adopted by the Moscow party committee, was another step toward illegal seizure of power.
17 Apr	30 Apr	<u>Izvestia</u> editorial	Lenin's attacks on the Provisional Government had drawn such strong criticism from all non-Bolshevik quarters that <u>Izvestia</u> felt obliged to make a personal defense of Lenin in an editorial.
<u>May 1917</u>			
18 Apr	1 May	Milyukov note to Allies	The note promised that Russia would continue in the war.
20 Apr	3 May	Bolsheviks organize anti-government demonstrations under slogan "Down with Milyukov"	
24-29 Apr	7-12 May	All-Russian Party Conference of Bolsheviks	Lenin had by now gained control of the party machinery, and the conference adopted the slogan "All power to the Soviets" in approving Lenin's idea that the Government must be overthrown. That this was only a tactical move is shown by the fact that, once in power themselves, the Communists reduced the soviets to impotence and reserved all power to the party. At the meeting Stalin repeated the Bolshevik promise to respect the right of self-determination.

<u>Date (Old Style)</u>	<u>Date (New Style)</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
27 Apr	10 May	Premier Lvov suggests coalition government	Lvov invited the Petrograd Soviet to share power and responsibility by nominating members to a coalition cabinet. The offer, initially refused on 30 April/12 May, was later accepted after the resignation of Miliukov.
30 Apr	13 May	Guchkov resigns as Minister of War	
2 May	15 May	All-Russian Soviet appeals to army to continue fighting in defense of Russia.	This was an effective refutation of the Bolshevik claim that it was only Tsarist agents and traitors to the working class that desired continuation of the war.
3 May	16 May	Miliukov resigns as Minister of Foreign Affairs	On the same day the government withdrew Miliukov's note of 18 April/1 May.
4 May	17 May	Trotsky arrives in Russia	
5 May	18 May	Coalition Government formed	The new cabinet comprised 2 Mensheviks, 2 Social Revolutionaries, 2 Independent Socialists, plus 6 Socialists representing the Soviet, including Kerensky as Minister of War and Marine. The cabinet's official program included: peace on the basis of national self-determination without annexations or indemnities; consolidation and democratization of the army; organization of national economic life; protection of labor; question of land distribution to be left to Constituent Assembly; revision of tax system to shift burden to propertied class; strengthening of local democratic self-government; and convening of Constituent Assembly as soon as possible. This was a truly liberal, socialistic program, but the Bolsheviks rejected it because it was not Marxist.
6 May	19 May	Executive Committee of the Soviet officially endorses new government and its program	

May 1917

<u>Date (Old Style)</u>	<u>Date (New Style)</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
9 May	22 May	Kerensky issues Declaration of Soldiers' Rights	The Declaration, based on Order No. 1 of 1/14 March was the first step in carrying out the new cabinet's program and also reflected the Government's desire to heed the wishes of the people as expressed through the Soviets.
9 May	22 May	All-Russian Conference of Mensheviks	A Government measure designed to permit improvement of the economic situation.
16 May	29 May	United States grants \$100,000,000 loan to Provisional Government	The peasants had requested this action pending final solution of the land problem by the Constituent Assembly.
17 May	30 May	Government forbids land transactions	
		<u>June 1917</u>	
20 May	2 Jun	Lenin advocates illegal land seizure at Peasant Congress	An attempt to embarrass the government and to hamper its operation.
25 May	7 Jun	Peasants vote confidence in Provisional Government	
30 May-3 Jun	12 Jun-16 Jun	Conference of Factory Committees of Petersburg and environs	Organized and controlled by the Bolsheviks, the conference approved a Bolshevik plan for "workers' control" of factories, and ordered the formation of a factory committee and trade union center, which soon became the voice of the Petrograd proletariat.
4 Jun	17 Jun	Lenin article on self-determination	Lenin denounced the government for not having explicitly recognized the right of freedom of secession. Yet, as noted before, when the Communists came to power, they used force to defeat any and every attempt by non-Russian peoples to exercise this right.

June 1917

<u>Date (Old Style)</u>	<u>Date (New Style)</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
3-24 Jun	16 Jun-7 Jul	First All-Russian Congress of Soviets	Composed of 822 voting delegates (285 Social Revolutionaries, 248 Mensheviks, 105 Bolsheviks, 184 others), the congress voted confidence in the government by a vote of 543 to 126, with 52 abstentions, and rejected the Bolshevik slogan of "All power to the Soviets." In providing for regular future sessions with 250 members elected on a proportional basis, the congress allocated only 35 (10.4 per cent) to the Bolsheviks. The congress also created a Central Executive Committee (CEC) to act in its name between sessions.
9 Jun	22 Jun	Congress of Soviets asks government to stop financial support of Duma and the State Council	Planned by the Bolsheviks for the following day, they were forced to cancel the demonstration because of this opposition.
9 Jun	22 Jun	Congress of Soviets denounces planned anti-government street demonstration.	The Rada asserted its right to decide the Ukraine's future on the basis of self-determination and freedom of secession. When, in late 1917, it proclaimed the independence of the Ukraine, the Communists sent in the Red Army to prevent this independence from being realized.
11 Jun	24 Jun	Establishment of Ukrainian Rada (National Council)	
<u>July 1917</u>			
18 Jun	1 Jul	Demonstration in Petrograd	Planned as a workers' demonstration, the Bolsheviks succeeded in turning it into a political demonstration on their behalf.
18 Jun	1 Jul	Russian offensive begins in Galicia	Ordered by Kerensky, the offensive was designed to expel German and Austrian troops from occupied Russian territory. Initially successful, the offensive later broke down as a result of the lack of discipline and mutiny stirred up by the Bolsheviks.

Q

July 1917

Date (Old Style)	Date (New Style)	Event	Comment
21 Jun	4 Jul	Formation of an Economic Council	The Bolsheviks denounced this move as a step towards economic dictatorship; yet on 5/18 December 1917, barely a month after they had seized power, they themselves established a Supreme Council of National Economy with even more extensive powers.
26 Jun	9 Jul	Minister of Communications orders administration of Russian State Railways turned over to railway employers' committees	Another proof that the Provisional Government was truly socialistic and revolutionary and not reactionary as the Bolsheviks claimed.
3-6 Jul	16-19 Jul	Attempted Bolshevik <u>coup</u> in Petrograd	To make up for lack of support in Petrograd, the Bolsheviks brought in 20,000 supporters from Kronstadt. The CEC rejected a request of the mob to assume all power.
6 Jul	19 Jul	Lenin and Zinoviev ordered arrested	
7 Jul	20 Jul	Order reestablished in Petrograd Premier	The government suppressed the attempted Bolshevik coup through the use of loyal troops and popular elements.
8 Jul	21 Jul	Lvov resigns; Kerensky appointed Premier	
15 Jul	28 Jul	CEC and All-Russian Executive Committee of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies approve Government's action against attempted Bolshevik <u>coup</u>	Earlier, on 30 June/13 July, the CEC approved a resolution accusing the Bolsheviks of demagoguery, illegal agitation, and mutiny.
18 Jul	31 Jul	General Kornilov replaces General Brusilov as Commander-in-Chief	

August 1917

Date (Old Style)	Date (New Style)	Event	Comment
21 Jul	3 Aug	First meeting of Economic Council	
22 Jul	4 Aug	Arrest of Trotsky and Lunacharsky	
24 Jul	6 Aug	Kerensky reorganizes cabinet	The new cabinet contained 11 Socialists and 7 non-Socialists.
26 Jul-3 Aug	8-16 Aug	Sixth Congress of the Bolshevik Party	Because of failure of attempted July coup, the party changed its slogan from "All power to the Soviets" to "A revolutionary dictatorship of Workers and Peasants." The Trotsky group, the Inter-Regionlists, joined the Bolshevik Party. Rykov and Kamenev urged, while Lenin rejected, participation in the forthcoming State Conference.
12-14 Aug	25-27 Aug	State Conference held in Moscow	Called by Kerensky to discuss the political situation, the conference was attended by more than 2,000 delegates representing all political parties except the Bolshevik, the Duma, local governments, cooperative societies, trade unions, universities, the army, and the liberal professions. The critical nature of Bolshevik propaganda during this period is shown by the fact that when Kerensky announced the conference in July, they claimed it was the first step in an unjustified removal of the government to Moscow, yet they themselves removed the entire government to Moscow on 12 March 1918, only four months after seizing power.
			<u>September 1917</u>
20 Aug	2 Sep	Petrograd City Council elections	In the elections, the Social Revolutionaries obtained 37 per cent of the vote, the Cadets 20 per cent, and the Bolsheviks 33 1/3 per cent.
26 Aug	8 Sep	Bolshevik Central Committee orders formation of armed workers' squads	The squads, to be formed in Petrograd, Moscow, and other cities, was a step in preparation for another coup.

September 1917

<u>Date (Old Style)</u>	<u>Date (New Style)</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
27 Aug	9 Sep	Kerensky removes Kornilov as Commander-in-Chief	Learning that Kornilov planned a counter-revolution to establish a military dictatorship, Kerensky immediately removed the general from his post.
28 Aug	10 Sep	Kornilov revolt	Kornilov refused to accept Kerensky's order for his dismissal and attempted to raise a revolt by calling on the Russian people for support against the Provisional Government. Because of its wide popular support, the Government suppressed the Kornilov movement easily.
31 Aug	13 Sep	Bolsheviks obtain majority in Petrograd Soviet	The first act of the Directory, which was headed by Kerensky, was formally to proclaim Russia a republic.
1 Sep	14 Sep	Five-man Directory assumes power	
4 Sep	17 Sep	Trotsky released from prison	
8 Sep	21 Sep	Government forbids forcible seizure of crops and harvested grains	In contrast, throughout the 40 years of Communist rule, peasants have always been forced to deliver their crops to the government at prices set by the latter. During the 1930's, several million peasants died of starvation because the Communist regime took all their grain without leaving them even enough to eat.
12-14 Sep	25-27 Sep	The Lenin letters	Entitled "The Bolsheviks Must Seize Power," the two letters were addressed to the Bolshevik Central Committee and to the Moscow and the Petrograd committees. They marked the beginning of the final stage of Bolshevik plans to seize power by force.

September 1917

Date (Old Style)	Date (New Style)	Event	Comment
14-22 Sep	27 Sep-5 Oct	Democratic Conference in Petrograd	The conference was convened for the purpose of uniting all forces against the danger of counter-revolution. The Bolsheviks attended, but all their efforts were directed at preventing the conference from taking any effective action.
15 Sep	28 Sep	Bolshevik Central Committee debates question of armed revolt for first time	
			<u>October 1917</u>
18 Sep	1 Oct	Bolsheviks obtain majority on Moscow Soviet Executive Committee	
25 Sep	8 Oct	Trotsky elected president of Petrograd Soviet	For the first time the Bolsheviks were now able to persuade a soviet to adopt a vote of no confidence in the government.
6 Oct	19 Oct	Government formally dissolves Duma and State Council	
7 Oct	20 Oct	Pre-Parliament opened by Kerensky	Convened by order of the Democratic Conference, the Pre-Parliament included 66 Bolsheviks, 60 Mensheviks, 120 Social Revolutionaries, and 308 other leftists. After a denunciatory statement by Trotsky, the Bolsheviks walked out of the meeting.
9 Oct	22 Oct	Lenin visits Petrograd in disguise	Lenin had fled to Finland after the attempted July coup to avoid arrest.
10 Oct	23 Oct	Bolshevik Central Committee approves idea of armed revolt	Only Zinoviev and Kamenev voted against the plan. The meeting also approved the formation of a seven-man Politburo, which was destined to become the repository of all power within the Communist Party.

October 1917

<u>Date (old style)</u>	<u>Date (New Style)</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
11 Oct	24 Oct	Kamenev-Zinoviev letter	The letter, which protested the decision in favor of armed insurrection, was circulated by its authors to all Bolshevik organizations.
13 Oct	26 Oct	Petrograd Soviet forms Revolutionary Military Committee	Under Trotsky as president, the new Committee at once succeeded in taking over control of the Petrograd garrison.
16 Oct	29 Oct	Bolshevik Central Committee reaffirms decision of 10/23 October	The committee also set up a five-man committee to organize the insurrection.
18 Oct	31 Oct	Kamenev resigns from Central Committee in protest	
		The Kamenev letter	
			<u>November 1917</u>
21 Oct	3 Nov	Petrograd Soviet recognizes Revolutionary Military Committee as commander of the Petrograd Garrison	As president of the committee, Trotsky assured the appointment of Bolshevik sympathizers as commissars to all military units and key positions.
23 Oct	5 Nov	Revolutionary Military Committee takes over Petrograd garrison	
24 Oct	6 Nov	Bolsheviks make final preparations for revolt	
25 Oct	7 Nov	The October Revolution; the Bolsheviks assume power	The end of the light of freedom and the beginning of the dark of Communist rule.

SOURCES

- Bunyan, James, Intervention, Civil War, and Communism in Russia, April-December 1918, Baltimore, 1936.
- Bunyan, James, and Fisher, H. H., The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-1918, Stanford, 1934.
- Carr, Edward, The Bolshevik Revolution, 3 vols., London, 1950.
- Chamberlain, William, The Russian Revolution, 2 vols., London, 1935.
- Curtiss, John S., The Russian Revolution of 1917, Princeton, 1957.
- Eichenbaum, V.M., Nineteen-Seventeen: The Russian Revolution Betrayed, New York, 1954.
- Gankin, Olga, and Fisher, H.H., The Bolsheviks and the World War, Stanford, 1940.
- Gorky, Maxim, et al, History of the Civil War in the U.S.S.R., 2 vols., New York, 1947.
- Mazour, Anatole, Russia Past and Present, New York, 1951.
- Rauch, Georg von, A History of Soviet Russia, New York, 1957.
- Schapiro, Leonard, The Origin of the Communist Autocracy, London, 1955.
- Sukhanov, N.N., The Russian Revolution 1917, London, 1955.
- Timasheff, Nicholas, The Great Retreat, New York, 1946.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

PROLOGUE TO INFAMY: A CHRONOLOGY OF
COMMUNISM'S FIRST YEAR OF POWER

August 1957

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
SEARCHED BY CLASS X
INDEXED
FILED
DATE 1 JAN 1981 BY REVIEWER: DMR/22

PROLOGUE TO INFAMY: A CHRONOLOGY OF
COMMUNISM'S FIRST YEAR OF POWER

November 7, 1957 will mark the 40th anniversary of Communist rule in Russia. Already the Soviet propaganda machine has begun to spew forth reams of material in connection with that event, most of it designed to point up the "miraculous" changes for the better which the Communists have succeeded in effecting in Russia during their years of power.

Communist propaganda, both in general and that currently being issued, implies, if it does not explicitly claim, that the advent of Communism in 1917 was the result of unanimous demand and support by the peoples of the areas which today constitute the Soviet Union; that immediately upon their assumption of power, a veritable paradise on earth was created which has, since then, constantly increased in perfection.

The truth is, however, that in November 1917 the Communists (or Bolsheviks as they were then called) were but a small minority who imposed its rule by force; that the peoples of vast sections of Russia hated Communism and resisted the Communists to the limits of their ability; that almost all of the non-Russian peoples of the Russian Empire attempted to exercise the right of self-determination (which the Bolsheviks hypocritically had promised to recognize) and to establish independent states, only to have their efforts suppressed by Red Army aggression; that Russia, far from becoming a paradise, was converted into one huge jail which was the scene of warfare, tyranny, famine, insurrection and carnage.

About 350 years ago, Shakespeare wrote in one of his plays, The Tempest, that "what is past is prologue," meaning that the past actions of a nation are an indication of what it will do in the future. In view of the Communists' 40-year record of unparalleled despotism, aggression, bad-faith, cruelty and hypocrisy, there can be no doubt that these same elements will characterize Soviet actions in the future. The maxim is equally valid when projected backward in time. That is, the record of the Communists during their first year in power provided a reliable indication of what was to follow during the ensuing 39 years. The illegality, treachery, bad-faith, aggression and tyranny practiced by the Communists in 1917-1918 was but the prologue to 39 more years of the same which differed only in detail and degree but not in essence, as the attached chronology will show.

November 1917

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
7 November	Bolsheviks seize power	The Bolsheviks seized power by force and have ever since relied on force to remain in power. Force is also the basis of every other Communist regime which exists today. Communists have never yet been able to persuade any people to accept Communism willingly.
8 November	Land confiscation decree	The decree was designed to win peasant support. It ordered confiscation of large landholdings and their distribution to peasants, and specifically left untouched holdings of "cossacks, soldiers, and simple peasants." Later, the Communists confiscated all land and decreed collectivized farming in spite of this decree.
9 November	Freedom of the press curtailed	The Communists did not want the Russian people to know the truth, so they enacted the first measure to make the entire Russian press subservient to the Communists.
11 November	Anti-Bolshevik uprising of Petrograd cadets	This was the first of many attempts by various groups to prevent the Communists from consolidating power.
11 November	Vilkzhel (All-Russian Executive Committee of the Union of Railway Workers) demands a coalition government	An important sector of Russian workers indicated that they did not view Communist rule as a blessing.
15 November	Soviet government issues Declaration on the Rights of Nationalities	The declaration specifically recognized the right of non-Russian peoples to secede from Russia if they so desired. But when they attempted to use this right, the Communists ruthlessly suppressed the various national movements.
17 November	Confiscation of all private printing presses and stocks of paper	Another move towards gagging the Russian press.

November 1917

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
-------------	--------------	---------------------

20 November Ukrainian National Council (Rada) proclaims Ukrainian National Republic
The Ukrainians were the first people to attempt to exercise the right of self-determination. But the Communists kept the Ukraine in the Soviet Union by force.

25 November Elections to the Constituent Assembly

This was the first and only free election ever held in Russia since the Revolution. The Communists obtained less than one-fourth of the votes and only 175 out of 707 seats.

27 November Workers' control of industry introduced

The Revolution had allegedly been carried out primarily for the sake of the industrial workers (proletariat), and this was a gesture to the workers. But in less than a year, party bureaucrats had assumed complete control of all economic life, and the workers had been reduced to the status of slaves of the Communist state, which they still are today.

December 1917

1 December Suppression of all non-Bolshevik newspapers except Maxim Gorky's Novaya Zhizn and the Socialist Revolutionary Party organ Dolya Naroda.
The third step in bringing the entire press under Communist control. The Communists knew that there was so much to criticize in their regime that they did not dare to permit the existence of uncontrolled newspapers.

6 December Finland declares its independence

The second non-Russian people to show its dislike of Communism through exercise of the right of self-determination.

7 December Lenin and Stalin issue their Appeal to the Muslims of Russia and the East

The declaration promised the Muslims that they would be free to choose their own government and promised that in the Soviet Union all their customs and traditions would be respected. But

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
7 December (cont)		
10 December	Crimean Kurultai (Constituent Assembly), which had opened at Bakchisarai on 26 November, appoints 5-man directory as government of Crimean Tatar Republic	
11 December	Fourth Regional Muslim Congress at Kokand proclaims territorial autonomy of Turkestan	
11 December	Lithuanian Diet proclaims independence of Lithuania	
15 December	Armistice signed at Brest-Litovsk	The Soviets had requested the Germans for an armistice and agreed to immediate peace negotiations.
15 December	Invitation to join Bolshevik movement rejected by Tsalkov, leader of the Kazan Muslims, because of Red mistreatment of minorities.	The declaration of 7 December did not delude Russian Muslims into putting faith in the Communists.
17 December	Soviet ultimatum to the Ukrainian Rada	This was the first clear indication that the Soviet promise to recognize the right of self-determination was nothing but a hypocritical attempt to secure support for the Bolsheviks.
18 December	Establishment of the Supreme Council of National Economy	This was one of the first measures designed to bring every phase of Russian economy under party control.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
December 1917 20 December	Cheka established	Before the Revolution, abolition of the Okrana had been a principal feature of the Bolshevik program. The Communists did indeed abolish the Okrana, but now they established their own secret police organization, the Cheka (later known as the OGPU and NKVD), which from the beginning was many times worse than the Okrana had ever been.
22 December	Peace negotiations begin at Brest-Litovsk	
24 December	Soviet Commissariat of Education assumes control of church seminaries and other schools and their property	
26 December	Kazak-Kirghiz establish government of Alash-Orda at Semipalatinsk	
27 December	Nationalization of banks	
30 December	Army ranks and titles abolished	This was a major element in the Bolshevik promise for a classless society. But compare the present Red Army with its imposing rank system, gaudy uniforms, and bemedalled generals and marshals.
31 December	Civil marriage and divorce decree; church ceremonies for same decree invalid	This constituted a serious attack by the Communists on the sanctity of the family. It was a violation also of the pledge made to Muslims, for Islamic law requires that marriage and divorce of Muslims be executed according to religious forms.
31 December	Byelorussian Congress dispersed by Bolsheviks	The Communists were certain that the Congress would vote for Byelorussian independence, therefore they forcibly dispersed the Congress before it could take any action.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
January 1918		
5 January	Obligatory Red Guard service decreed for Petrograd proletariat	The decree was a clear indication that the Bolsheviks had failed to win a sufficient following to enable them to recruit on a voluntary basis the military force they needed to stay in power.
12 January	Latvia proclaims its independence	
18 January	Constituent Assembly opens	
19 January	Constituent Assembly dissolved by Bolsheviks	
22 January	Declaration of Ukrainian independence by Ukrainian Rada	
23 January	Subordination of trade unions to the Soviet government	The first vote taken by the Assembly was a defeat for the Communists, therefore they dissolved it. It spelled an end to any chance for democracy in Russia, for ever since that time the Communist Party, not the people, has exercised all power.
23-31 January	Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets meets in Petrograd	Trade unions are everywhere the protectors of the rights of labor. But by the present decree, the Communists converted them into an appendage of the Communist Party.
28 January	Sovnarkom (Council of People's Commissars) decrees organization of the Red Army	The Congress issued a Declaration on the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited Peoples, another meaningless statement since the Bolsheviks in actuality recognized no rights for anyone which did not serve to consolidate their own exclusive control.
31 January	Enactment of the Law on Land Socialization	This was the unequivocal betrayal of the peasants since the law provided that henceforth <u>all</u> land belonged to the state without exception.

February 1918

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
5 February	Separation of church and state	Another step in the campaign to impoverish and discredit religion. Since this date, religious freedom in the Soviet Union has meant freedom of anti-religious propaganda.
8 February	Red forces occupy Kiev, depose and suppress the Ukrainian Rada	A flagrant example of Communist aggression and violation of the pledge to recognize the right of self-determination.
10 February	Cancellation of all Russian financial obligations	International law provides that every state must honor its international obligations, including debts, even though the form of government of the state has undergone a fundamental change. This was but the first of many examples of Communist contempt for the requirements of international law.
11 February	Muslim-Bolshevik conflict begins in Kokand	
12 February	Bolshevik forces bombard Muslim quarter of Kokand	
17 February	Ukrainian Rada asks German help against Soviet invasion	
19 February	Red forces storm Old City of Kokand	The capture of the Old City was followed by three days of pillage and massacre, after which the Communists burned the town. This is a good example of Communist indifference to the laws of humanity and war. What they cannot control they prefer to destroy.
19 February	Soviet government agrees to terms of Brest-Litovsk treaty	
22 February	Kokand Muslims forced to acknowledge authority of Tashkent Council of People's Commissars	The Communists used this agreement as proof that Turkestan's Muslims wanted to remain in the Soviet Union, pretending that it had been given voluntarily.
24 February	Estonia proclaims its independence	

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
		<u>March 1918</u>
3 March	Treaty of Brest-Litovsk signed	
10 March	Soviets ratify Treaty of Brest-Litovsk	
12 March	Government and party headquarters moved to Moscow	From this time on the Kremlin became the symbol of Communist tyranny and oppression.
14 March	Bolshevik attack on Bukhara	The Red forces under Kolesov were defeated by local patriots and were compelled to retreat to Tashkent on 18 March.
15 March	Fourth All-Russian Congress of Soviets approves Treaty of Brest-Litovsk	
25 March	Byelorussian Declaration of Independence	By 1 January 1919, invading Communist forces had seized control and Byelorussian independence came to an end.
		<u>April 1918</u>
2 April	Sovnarkom decrees compulsory exchange of commodities for grain	Peasant resistance to Communist measures led them to withhold crops, so the Communists took coercive measures to solve the serious food shortage that had arisen.
2-5 April	Baku Muslims massacred by Armenian Dashnaks under direction of Ispolkom (Executive Committee of the Baku Soviet)	Because the Baku Muslims were strongly anti-Communist, the Soviets, as they had done in Kokand, chose to destroy what they could not control.
22 April	Transcaucasian Republic proclaims its independence.	
22 April	Entire adult population of the Soviet Union made liable for compulsory military and labor service	The Communists had condemned the "slave" economy under the Tsars. Now they themselves introduced forced labor. Since this time no Russian worker has been free to choose his own job but has had to work where the government orders. The Soviets later expanded the system to create a real slave labor force under OGPU (later NKVD) direction.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
<u>April 1918</u>		
22 April	Foreign trade nationalized	
23 April	Reds arrest members of Kazan Shura (Assembly) who voted for autonomy	The Kazan Tatars were another Muslim people who attempted to exercise the right of self-determination only to meet with Communist suppression.
25 April	Officers of All-Russian Muslim Movement arrested in Ufa	
27 April	CEC (All-Russian Central Executive Committee) abolishes right of inheritance	Another violation of the 7 December pledge not to disturb Muslim customs and traditions, since for Muslims inheritance is a matter regulated by religious law.
28 April	Don Voisko Republic established	The Cossacks of the Don were not basically opposed to remaining a part of Russia, but they most emphatically did not wish to be part of a Russia ruled by the Communists.
<u>May 1918</u>		
9 May	CEC decrees food dictatorship; establishes system of forced food deliveries	Communist rule had resulted in famine conditions by May 1918. To solve the problem, the government instituted compulsory food delivery quotas for peasants without regard for the fact of whether or not the quota left the peasant with enough food for his own needs. This quota system resulted in the starvation of millions of peasants during the collectivization drive in the 1930's.
11 May	Delegates to the Don Krug (Assembly), meeting in Novocherkassk, elect General Krasnov as Ataman (Chief Executive)	
11 May	North-Caucasian Federation declares its independence	
16-19 May	Red Army revolt at Saratov	

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
		<u>May 1918</u>
17 May	Civil war begins in the south	The hollowness of Communist claims of widespread support among the people of Russia is shown by the many attempts of various peoples to secede as well as by the existence of civil war and revolts among its own conscripted military forces.
20 May	CEC declares war on kulaks	To turn peasant attention from violations of promises made to the peasants by the Communists, the government attempted to arouse the wrath of poorer peasants against their richer or more successful colleagues.
23 May	Conference of factory-shop delegates at Moscow calls for strike against government, denounces latter's mistaken policies and terroristic policies.	This action, supported also by the Congress of Railway Workers, demonstrated that the Communists did not command the support even of large sectors of the working class.
26 May	Transcaucasian Federation dissolved Georgia proclaims its independence	Although the Soviet government at first signed a treaty with Georgia which recognized the latter's independence, Communist forces later invaded the country and forcibly reincorporated it into the Soviet Union. The same fate also befell Georgia's sister republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan.
29 May	Sovnarkom declares martial law in Moscow	If the Communist regime was as warmly welcomed by the people as the Communists allege, it is hard to understand why the government found it necessary to institute martial law in the very capital of the country.
29 May	Supreme Revolutionary Tribunal established by CEC	This was an extra-legal court set up to try people for the crime of being anti-Communist.
30 May	Sovnarkom issues an appeal to the Don and Kuban Cossacks for support; declares the Don region an integral part of the RSFSR	

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
		<u>June 1918</u>
1 June	Crimean Tatar government formed at Sevastopol	
5 June	Don Cossacks reject Sovnarkom appeal; proclaim an independent Republic	
8 June	Anti-Communist governments formed at Samara and Omsk	
11 June	Establishment of Committees of Poor Peasants to carry out grain seizures	This was not an exercise of the right of self-determination but attempts by patriotic Russians to establish a representative government to oppose the usurping Communist regime.
14 June	Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries expelled from the CEC	Another Communist attempt to provoke internecine struggle among the peasantry and, at the same time, to help solve the increasingly serious food shortage.
17 June	Anti-Communist insurrection at Tambov	Since this date, only Communist party members or sympathizers have been permitted to occupy any position of political power.
21 June	Supreme Revolutionary Tribunal decrees death sentence for Admiral Shechastnyi	This action occurred despite the fact that the Communists themselves had abolished the death penalty on November 8, 1917. The action illustrates Communist contempt for legal requirements, even those of laws they themselves have enacted.
22 June	Sovnarkom appeals to railway workers not to strike	
28 June	Nationalization of all large-scale industrial and commercial enterprises	
30 June	Murmansk Soviet rejects orders of Moscow regime*	

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
30 June	Strikes or any form of work stoppage declared equivalent to treason	This resolution, adopted by the Communist-controlled Joint Conference of Factory-Shop Committees and Trade Unions, emphasized the now complete Communist control of the worker. The strike is everywhere the workers' most effective weapon for improving his lot. The Russian worker was henceforth compelled to accept the work conditions and wages decreed unilaterally by the Soviet government.
		June 1918
1-3 July	Peasant riots in Perm, Rzhev, and Tver	
4 July	Siberian Regional Duma, sitting at Omsk, proclaims Siberia an independent republic	
6 July	Insurrection in Moscow, Petrograd, Yaroslav and 23 other Central Russian cities	
8 July	Insurrection at Murom	
8 July	A Provisional Government of Autonomous Siberia proclaimed at Vladivostok	
10 July	Soviet commander-in-chief on the Volga front rebels against Bolsheviks	
10 July	First Soviet constitution adopted	Despite constitutional clause reaffirming right of self-determination and describing the Soviet Union as a voluntary union of peoples, the Communists continued to use force to prevent secessions.
12 July	Decree forbidding religious instruction in schools	

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
		<u>July 1918</u>
16 July	Tsar and family murdered at Yekaterinburg	
21 July	Conference of Workers Delegates at Moscow criticizes government's economic policies, which resulted in arrest of all members two days later	Additional evidence that the Communists were not concerned with the welfare of the worker or cared what he thought. All the Communists wanted of the worker was unquestioning obedience to Communist Party orders.
31 July	Baku Soviet overthrown by Caspian sailors	Russian sailors had originally been among the most active revolutionaries, but by now even they had realized the true character of the Soviet despotism.
		<u>August 1918</u>
2 August	Anti-Communist government established at Archangel	
3 August	Decree of Agriculture Commissariat lays basis for completely planned agrarian economy	
4 August	Sovnarkom establishes food requisition cordon to facilitate compulsory food deliveries by peasants	
7 August	Workers of Izhevsk revolt against Bolsheviks	
20 August	CEC abolishes right to own any real estate of any kind	Previous decrees had stripped the peasant of his land. Now the Communists took title even to his house.
27 August	Supplementary peace treaty with Germany signed	
30 August	Attempt on Lenin's life in Moscow; Uritsky, a Cheka official, killed in Petrograd	

August 1918DateEventSignificance

31 August

British Embassy at Petrograd raided by Cheka

The immunity of diplomatic quarters is one of the oldest and firmest established rules of international law. This raid by the Cheka demonstrated once again the Communist contempt for international law and the established rules of international relations.

September 1918Date

2 September 512 hostages shot by the Cheka in Petrograd

This was only the first of many large-scale massacres of innocent people by the Cheka and its successors. Who does not recall the NKVD murder of 4,000 Polish officers in Katyn Forest and of entire peoples (Chechen-Ingush, Crimean Tatars, Kalmyks, Balkars, etc.) during World War II?

Date

3 September Unemployed forbidden to refuse work

Another link in the Communist enslavement of the Russian people.

Date

5 September Sovmarkom legalizes use of terror

The Soviet regime, by this act, announced to the world that terror, murder, torture, and assassination formed an integral part of Soviet government policy. This policy has never been changed and is still in effect today.

Date

14 September Baku captured by the Turks

October 1918Date

7 October Poles in Warsaw proclaim independence

Date

8 October University law

Since enactment of this law, academic freedom has been unknown in the Soviet Union. No teacher is allowed to teach anything considered contrary to Communist doctrine or which would reveal the truth about anything as contrasted to the falsehood disseminated by the government and party.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
26 October	Sovnarkom orders 35.5 billions of rubles in banknotes printed	
30 October	Sovnarkom levies 10 billion ruble tax on remaining bourgeoisie	
30 October	CEC issues new decree on compulsory food deliveries by peasants	
31 October	New Sovnarkom decree on universal compulsory labor duty	
<u>November 1918</u>		
4 November	All-Russian Provisional Government proclaimed in Ufa	This marked another attempt by non-Communist Russians to organize a government in opposition to the Soviet regime.
8 November	All-Russian Congress of Soviets demands end of Cheka excesses	The savagery of the Cheka was too much for even many revolutionaries to countenance. But by now the Congress of Soviets no longer possessed any real power, for the Communist Party was in complete control.
13 November	CEC repudiates Treaty of Brest-Litovsk	The Communists had petitioned the Germans for an armistice and then for a peace treaty, which they willingly had signed. Now they repudiated it. This was another example of Communist disregard of the norms of international relations. Soviet repudiation and violation of treaties solemnly entered into became commonplace especially since the end of World War II.
17 November	Crimean Tatar government finally suppressed	
21 November	Sovnarkom abolishes private trade	

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
22 November	Red Army units occupy Estonia, parts of Latvia and Lithuania	November 1918
5 December	CEC establishes Department of Soviet Propaganda	December 1918
8 December	Sovnarkom recognizes independence of Estonia	Estonia, as well as Latvia and Lithuania which were recognized two weeks later, retained their independence until 1940 when the Red Army occupied them and the three countries were forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union.
22 December	Independence of Latvia and Lithuania recognized	
23 December	CEC dissolves All-Russian Teachers Union	The Union was not Communist-controlled, therefore the Communists suppressed it. The teachers' union which has since taken its place is nothing but an obedient mouthpiece of the Communist Party.

SOURCES

- Bunyan, James, Intervention, Civil War and Communism in Russia, April-December 1918, Baltimore, 1936.
- Bunyan, James, and Fisher, H. H., The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-1918, Stanford, 1934.
- Carr, Edward, The Bolshevik Revolution, 3 vols., London, 1950.
- Degras, Jane, Calendar of Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, 1917-1941, London, 1948.
- _____, Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, Vol. I: 1917-1924, London, 1951.
- Gankin, Olga, and Fisher, H. H., The Bolsheviks and the World War, Stanford, 1940.
- Gorky, Maxim, et al., Histoire de la revolution russe, 4 vols., Paris, 1937.
- _____, History of the Civil War in the USSR, 2 vols., New York, 1947.
- Labry, Raoul, Une legislation communiste, Paris, 1920.
- Mazour, Anatole, Russia Past and Present, New York, 1951.
- Pipes, Richard, The Formation of the Soviet Union. Communism and Nationalism 1917-1923, Cambridge, Mass., 1954.
- Rauch, Georg von, A History of Soviet Russia, New York, 1957.
- Schapiro, Leonard, The Origin of the Communist Autocracy, London, 1955.
- Timasheff, Nicholas, The Great Retreat, New York, 1946.
- United States, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Trends in Russian Foreign Policy since World War I. A Chronology of Events from March 15, 1917 to January 1, 1947, prepared by the Legislative Reference Service, 80th Congress, 1st Session, Washington, 1947.

THE LIGHT BEFORE THE DARK: A CHRONOLOGY
OF RUSSIAN EVENTS, FEBRUARY-OCTOBER 1917

August 1957

DOCUMENT NO. *[Signature]*
NO CHANGES IN CLASS
10 DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGE DATE
REF ID: A6510001
DATE 1957
BY [Signature] REVIEWER: 01.1952
1993

THE LIGHT BEFORE THE DARK: A CHRONOLOGY
OF RUSSIAN EVENTS, FEBRUARY-OCTOBER 1917

The Communists of the world will celebrate the 40th anniversary of Communist seizure of power in Russia on 7 November 1957. That day 40 years ago, however, marked more than just a Communist (then Bolshevik) seizure of power; it also marked the extinguishment of the flame of civil liberty and democratic government in Russia, and the passage of the Russian people from the hopeful light of freedom into the dark despair of Communist despotism.

That flame was, admittedly, still in its infancy, but it was struggling vigorously for existence and was daily growing in strength. Had it not been snuffed out by the Bolsheviks on 7 November 1917, the Russian people would very likely today be enjoying the life of free men instead of merely existing as the oppressed subjects of a tyrannical and despotic regime, unparalleled in history, in which all thought and effort are exerted for the well-being of the Communist Party and its members and none for the ordinary citizen.

It is too often forgotten that the Bolshevik Revolution was not directed against the autocratic Tsarist regime which had for centuries oppressed the Russian people (though Tsarist oppression was liberty compared to the oppression imposed by the Communists), but against a democratic government which had freed Russia from Tsarist rule by means of the first 1917 revolution (the February Revolution) and which was laboring to bring the benefits of democracy and liberty to the people. It was this regime which was overthrown by the Bolshevik (i.e., the October) Revolution of 7 November 1917.

The February Revolution was a spontaneous, moderate movement which sought to replace the incompetent and autocratic government of the Tsar with a more effective, representative and progressive liberal regime. During its existence from February to October, this Provisional Government, despite the turmoil of war and the attendant economic and social upheavals and difficulties, as well as the manifold problems inherent in any radical change of government, made great and steady progress towards its goals. The government reflected the deepest desires of the great mass of the Russian people and therefore commanded the cooperation of all the principal political parties then existing-- Socialist, Social Democratic (Menshevik), Social Revolutionary, and Constitutional Democratic (Cadet).

The only party which refused to cooperate with the Provisional Government was the very small, but fanatic, Bolshevik Party. Only the Bolsheviks endeavored to obstruct the efforts of the new regime and to prevent it from functioning effectively. They were not concerned with the welfare of the people but only with securing power for themselves. Therefore, since they themselves had not carried out the February Revolution and did not then control the government, they deprecated it and pretended that it was simply a front for the ruling classes. And since the new regime professed Socialist rather than Marxist ideals and goals, they declared that the interests of the common people were being betrayed.

Using these hypocritical charges as a justification for their obstructionist, conspiratorial, and undermining activities, the Bolsheviks, from the beginning, systematically sabotaged the government and its efforts. For they knew that only by preventing the realization by the government of its liberal program could they create a situation in which they could seize the power they so desperately craved. To this end, the Bolsheviks deliberately sowed discord, suspicion, and mutiny among the people and army. At the same time they presented themselves to the Russian people as the only true protectors of the revolution and endeavored to win support by making wildly extravagant promises (none of which were fulfilled after they seized power).

In particular the Bolsheviks exerted every possible effort (successfully, as it turned out) to capture control of the soviets--workers', peasants', and soldiers' councils--which had sprung up all over Russia. Control of the soviets proved, in fact, to be the basis for the Bolshevik success in October, for the soviets exercised enormous power. The Petrograd Soviet at first and then later the Central Executive Committee of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets exercised power almost as extensive as that held by the Provisional Government itself. There was, in fact, virtually a dual government in Russia.

It cannot be denied that the government, by permitting this sharing of power, helped materially to dig its own grave; but it is also proof that the government was sincere in its efforts to reflect the will of the people and to associate them in the processes of government. Certainly it was a far different situation than that now prevailing in Russia in which the Communist Party exercises a monopoly of political power while the ordinary citizen has no rights but only the duty to obey whatever orders the Party issues.

The above statements can easily be verified, for the truth is revealed by the actions of the Provisional Government during the period of light (February to October) to bring freedom and democracy to Russia, and by the actions of the Bolsheviks during the same period to prevent this from happening, as the attached chronology shows.

<u>Date*</u> <u>(Old Style)</u>	<u>Date*</u> <u>(New Style)</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
26 Feb	11 Mar	Tsar orders Duma dissolved	
27 Feb	12 Mar	The February Revolution	
27 Feb	12 Mar	Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies organized in Petrograd	
1 Mar	14 Mar	Petrograd Soviet issues its Order No. 1	The beginning of the light of freedom. The Duma refused the Tsar's order to dissolve and instead set up a 12-man Executive Committee under Rodzianko to exercise governmental power.
2 Mar	15 Mar	Abdication of Tsar Nicholas on behalf of self and son	
2 Mar	15 Mar	Establishment of Provisional Government under Prince Lvov	Kerensky, a Socialist, who was also vice-president of the Petrograd Soviet, became Minister of Justice. The government's first act was to decree civil liberties: general amnesty for all political, religious, and military prisoners; freedom of speech and press, and freedom for strikes and unions; abolition of all social, religious, and national distinctions; pledge to convene a Constituent Assembly; elections to be based on universal suffrage; soldiers to have full civil rights when not on active duty. These measures were hardly those of an autocratic regime, as the Bolsheviks termed the Provisional Government. None of these rights have ever been enjoyed in Russia since the Communists seized power.

* The Julian Calendar, which was 13 days behind the Gregorian Calendar, was used in Russia throughout 1917. The Gregorian Calendar was officially adopted on 1/14 February 1918. For clarity both dates are shown for each

March 1917

Date (old Style)	Date (New Style)	Event	Comment
3 Mar	16 Mar	Abdication of Grand Duke Michael	This marked the undoubtedly end of Tsarist rule in Russia, although a republic was not formally proclaimed until several months later.
5 Mar	18 Mar	First issue of the Bolshevik organ <u>Pravda</u>	The first and subsequent issues bitterly attacked the new regime as "a government of capitalists and landlords" and demanded that the Soviets convene a Constituent Assembly to establish a "democratic republic." But when a popularly-elected Constituent Assembly did meet on 5/18 January 1918, the Communist regime under Lenin allowed it to exist for only one day. Never again has Russia known a truly representative assembly.
5 Mar	18 Mar	Molotov, in Petrograd Soviet, unsuccessfully proposes resolution attacking the Provisional Government	
8 Mar	21 Mar	Tsar Nicholas arrested	Another proof of the truly revolutionary character of the Provisional Government, for a regime representing the traditional ruling classes would never have taken this step.
9 Mar	22 Mar	Petrograd Soviet adopts "Bill of Rights of Soldiers"	
10 Mar	23 Mar	Petrograd Bolshevik Committee sets up commission to form Bolshevik organizations	This was the first Bolshevik move towards eventual seizure of power by force.
10-11 Mar	23-24 Mar	Agreement between Petrograd Soviet Executive Committee and Manufacturers' Association	The agreement, which was the first step in reshaping the economic structure of Russia along socialist lines, provided for (1) formation of factory committees; (2) formation on basis of parity between workers and employers of factory and central conciliation boards; and (3) an 8-hour work day.

March 1917

Date (Old Style)	Date (New Style)	Event	Comment
11 Mar	24 Mar	Provisional Government recognized by England, France, and Italy	Recognition had previously been extended on 9/22 March by the United States.
12 Mar	25 Mar	Stalin and Kamenev arrive in Petrograd	
12 Mar	25 Mar	Provisional Government decrees abolition of death penalty	A further liberal measure of the new regime.
14 Mar	27 Mar	Petrograd Soviet issues proclamation asking peace without annexations or indemnities	The government adopted this demand as official policy on 27 March/9 April.
			<u>April 1917</u>
28 Mar	10 Apr	Bolshevik Party Conference meets in Petrograd	
29 Mar	11 Apr	Government institutes grain monopoly	This was an attempt to solve the war-caused food shortage and to prevent profiteering--another measure to benefit the people, though the Bolsheviks denounced it as dictatorial.
29 Mar-3 Apr	11-16 Apr	All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in Petrograd	This was the highest organ of the Russian common people at the time; it is noteworthy that the Bolsheviks were only a tiny minority in it.
3 Apr	16 Apr	Lenin returns to Russia	
4 Apr	17 Apr	Joint meeting of Social Democrats (Mensheviks and Bolsheviks) in Petrograd	At the meeting Lenin presented his "April Theses" which attacked the government and rejected any cooperation with Socialists. The speech was denounced by all delegates save one.
7 Apr	20 Apr	"April Theses" published by Pravda	

April 1917

Date (Old Style)	Date (New Style)	Event	Comment
8 Apr	21 Apr	"April Theses" rejected by Bolshevik Petrograd Committee	The vote was 13 to 2, with one abstention. Lenin had not yet persuaded his colleagues that illegal conduct on behalf of the party was preferable to legal conduct on behalf of the nation.
10 Apr	23 Apr	Lenin publishes <u>The Tasks of the Proletariat in our Revolution</u>	In this tract Lenin explicitly endorsed the right of self-determination and of secession. But once the Communists attained power, they ruthlessly suppressed all attempts by non-Russian peoples to exercise these rights, which shows the emptiness of Bolshevik promises during this period of flight.
14 Apr	27 Apr	Bolshevik Petrograd District Committee asks immediate formation of Red Guard	This resolution, also adopted by the Moscow party committee, was another step toward illegal seizure of power.
17 Apr	30 Apr	<u>Izvestia</u> editorial	Lenin's attacks on the Provisional Government had drawn such strong criticism from all non-Bolshevik quarters that <u>Izvestia</u> felt obliged to make a personal defense of Lenin in an editorial.
			<u>May 1917</u>
18 Apr	1 May	Milyukov note to Allies	The note promised that Russia would continue in the war.
20 Apr	3 May	Bolsheviks organize anti-government demonstrations under slogan "Down with Milyukov"	
24-29 Apr	7-12 May	All-Russian Party Conference of Bolsheviks	Lenin had by now gained control of the party machinery, and the conference adopted the slogan "All power to the Soviets" in approving Lenin's idea that the Government must be overthrown. That this was only a tactical move is shown by the fact that, once in power themselves, the Communists reduced the soviets to impotence and reserved all power to the party. At the meeting Stalin repeated the Bolshevik promise to respect the right of self-

May 1917

<u>Date (Old Style)</u>	<u>Date (New Style)</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
27 Apr	10 May	Premier Lvov suggests coalition government	Lvov invited the Petrograd Soviet to share power and responsibility by nominating members to a coalition cabinet. The offer, initially refused on 30 April/12 May, was later accepted after the resignation of Miliukov.
30 Apr	13 May	Guchkov resigns as Minister of War	This was an effective refutation of the Bolshevik claim that it was only Tsarist agents and traitors to the working class that deserved continuation of the war.
2 May	15 May	All-Russian Soviet appeals to army to continue fighting in defense of Russia	
3 May	16 May	Miliukov resigns as Minister of Foreign Affairs	On the same day the government withdrew Miliukov's note of 18 April/1 May.
4 May	17 May	Trotsky arrives in Russia	
5 May	18 May	Coalition Government formed	The new cabinet comprised 2 Mensheviks, 2 Social Revolutionaries, 2 Independent Socialists, plus 6 Socialists representing the Soviet, including Kerensky as Minister of War and Marine. The cabinet's official program included: peace on the basis of national self-determination without annexations or indemnities; consolidation and democratization of the army; organization of national economic life; protection of labor; question of land distribution to be left to Constituent Assembly; revision of tax system to shift burden to propertied class; strengthening of local democratic self-government; and convening of Constituent Assembly as soon as possible. This was a truly liberal, socialistic program, but the Bolsheviks rejected it because it was not Marxist.
6 May	19 May	Executive Committee of the Soviet officially endorses new government and its program	

May 1917

<u>Date (Old Style)</u>	<u>Date (New Style)</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
9 May	22 May	Kerensky issues Declaration of Soldiers' Rights	The Declaration, based on Order No. 1 of 1/14 March, was the first step in carrying out the new cabinet's program and also reflected the government's desire to heed the wishes of the people as expressed through the Soviets.
9 May	22 May	All-Russian Conference of Mensheviks	
16 May	29 May	United States grants \$100,000,000 loan to Provisional Government	A government measure designed to permit improvement of the economic situation.
17 May	30 May	Government forbids land transactions	The peasants had requested this action pending final solution of the land problem by the Constituent Assembly.
		<u>June 1917</u>	
20 May	2 Jun	Lenin advocates illegal land seizure at Peasant Congress	An attempt to embarrass the government and to hamper its operation.
25 May	7 Jun	Peasants vote confidence in Provisional Government	
30 May-3 Jun	12 Jun-16 Jun	Conference of Factory Committees of Petersburg and environs	Organized and controlled by the Bolsheviks, the conference approved a Bolshevik plan for "workers' control" of factories, and ordered the formation of a factory committee and trade union center, which soon became the voice of the Petrograd proletariat.
4 Jun	17 Jun	Lenin article on self-determination	Lenin denounced the government for not having explicitly recognized the right of freedom of secession. Yet, as noted before, when the Communists came to power, they used force to defeat any and every attempt by non-Russian peoples to exercise this right.

June 1917

<u>Date (Old Style)</u>	<u>Date (New Style)</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
3-24 Jun	16 Jun-7 Jul	First All-Russian Congress of Soviets	Composed of 822 voting delegates (285 Social Revolutionaries, 248 Mensheviks, 105 Bolsheviks, 184 others), the congress voted confidence in the government by a vote of 543 to 126, with 52 abstentions, and rejected the Bolshevik slogan of "All power to the Soviets." In providing for regular future sessions with 250 members elected on a proportional basis, the congress allocated only 35 (10.4 per cent) to the Bolsheviks. The congress also created a Central Executive Committee (CEC) to act in its name between sessions.
9 Jun	22 Jun	Congress of Soviets asks government to stop financial support of Duma and the State Council	Planned by the Bolsheviks for the following day, they were forced to cancel the demonstration because of this opposition.
9 Jun	22 Jun	Congress of Soviets denounces planned anti-government street demonstration	The Rada asserted its right to decide the Ukraine's future on the basis of self-determination and freedom of secession. When, in late 1917, it proclaimed the independence of the Ukraine, the Communists sent in the Red Army to prevent this independence from being realized.
11 Jun	24 Jun	Establishment of Ukrainian Rada (National Council)	<u>July 1917</u>
18 Jun	1 Jul	Demonstration in Petrograd	Planned as a workers' demonstration, the Bolsheviks succeeded in turning it into a political demonstration on their behalf.
18 Jun	1 Jul	Russian offensive begins in Galicia	Ordered by Kerensky, the offensive was designed to expel German and Austrian troops from occupied Russian territory. Initially successful, the offensive later broke down as a result of the lack of discipline and mutiny stirred up by the Bolsheviks.

July 1917

Date (Old Style)	Date (New Style)	Event	Comment
21 Jun	4 Jul	Formation of an Economic Council	The Bolsheviks denounced this move as a step towards economic dictatorship; yet on 5/18 December 1917, barely a month after they had seized power, they themselves established a Supreme Council of National Economy with even more extensive powers.
26 Jun	9 Jul	Minister of Communications orders administration of Russian State Railways turned over to railway employers' committees	Another proof that the Provisional Government was truly socialistic and revolutionary and not reactionary as the Bolsheviks claimed.
3-6 Jul	16-19 Jul	Attempted Bolshevik <u>coup</u> in Petrograd	To make up for lack of support in Petrograd, the Bolsheviks brought in 20,000 supporters from Kronstadt. The CEC rejected a request of the mob to assume all power.
6 Jul	19 Jul	Lenin and Zinoviev ordered arrested	
7 Jul	20 Jul	Order reestablished in Petrograd	The government suppressed the attempted Bolshevik <u>coup</u> through the use of loyal troops and popular elements.
8 Jul	21 Jul	Lvov resigns; Kerensky appointed Premier	
15 Jul	28 Jul	CEC and All-Russian Executive Committee of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies approve Government's action against attempted Bolshevik <u>coup</u>	Earlier, on 30 June/13 July, the CEC approved a resolution accusing the Bolsheviks of demagogery, illegal agitation, and mutiny.
18 Jul	31 Jul	General Kornilov replaces General Brusilov as Commander-in-Chief	

August 1917

Date (old style)	Date (New Style)	Event	Comment
21 Jul	3 Aug	First meeting of Economic Council	
22 Jul	4 Aug	Arrest of Trotsky and Lunacharsky	
24 Jul	6 Aug	Kerensky reorganizes cabinet	The new cabinet contained 11 Socialists and 7 non-Socialists.
26 Jul-3 Aug	8-16 Aug	Sixth Congress of the Bolshevik Party	Because of failure of attempted July <u>coup</u> , the party changed its slogan from "All power to the Soviets" to "A revolutionary dictatorship of Workers and Peasants." The Trotsky group, the Inter-Regionals, joined the Bolshevik Party. Rykov and Kamenev urged, while Lenin rejected, participation in the forthcoming State Conference.
12-14 Aug	25-27 Aug	State Conference held in Moscow	Called by Kerensky to discuss the political situation, the conference was attended by more than 2,000 delegates representing all political parties except the Bolshevik, the Duma, local governments, cooperative societies, trade unions, universities, the army, and the liberal professions. The hypocritical nature of Bolshevik propaganda during this period is shown by the fact that when Kerensky announced the conference in July, they claimed it was the first step in an unjustified removal of the government to Moscow, yet they themselves removed the entire government to Moscow on 12 March 1918, only four months after seizing power.
			<u>September 1917</u>
20 Aug	2 Sep	Petrograd City Council elections	In the elections, the Social Revolutionaries obtained 37 per cent of the vote, the Cadets 20 per cent, and the Bolsheviks 33 1/3 per cent.
26 Aug	8 Sep	Bolshevik Central Committee orders formation of armed workers' squads	The squads, to be formed in Petrograd, Moscow, and other cities, was a step in preparation for another <u>coup</u> .

September 1917

<u>Date (Old Style)</u>	<u>Date (New Style)</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
27 Aug	9 Sep	Kerensky removes Kornilov as Commander-in-Chief	Learning that Kornilov planned a counter-revolution to establish a military dictatorship, Kerensky immediately removed the general from his post.
28 Aug	10 Sep	Kornilov revolt	Kornilov refused to accept Kerensky's order for his dismissal and attempted to raise a revolt by calling on the Russian people for support against the Provisional Government. Because of its wide popular support, the Government suppressed the Kornilov movement easily.
31 Aug	13 Sep	Bolsheviks obtain majority in Petrograd Soviet	
1 Sep	14 Sep	Five-man Directory assumes power	The first act of the Directory, which was headed by Kerensky, was formally to proclaim Russia a republic.
4 Sep	17 Sep	Trotsky released from prison	
8 Sep	21 Sep	Government forbids forcible seizure of crops and harvested grains	In contrast, throughout the 40 years of Communist rule, peasants have always been forced to deliver their crops to the government at prices set by the latter. During the 1930's, several million peasants died of starvation because the Communist regime took all their grain without leaving them even enough to eat.
12-14 Sep	25-27 Sep	The Lenin letters	Entitled "The Bolsheviks Must Seize Power," the two letters were addressed to the Bolshevik Central Committee and to the Moscow and the Petrograd committees. They marked the beginning of the final stage of Bolshevik plans to seize power by force.

September 1917

Date (Old Style)	Date (New Style)	Event	Comment
14-22 Sep	27 Sep-5 Oct	Democratic Conference in Petrograd	The conference was convened for the purpose of uniting all forces against the danger of counter-revolution. The Bolsheviks attended, but all their efforts were directed at preventing the conference from taking any effective action.
15 Sep	28 Sep	Bolshevik Central Committee debates question of armed revolt for first time	
			<u>October 1917</u>
18 Sep	1 Oct	Bolsheviks obtain majority on Moscow Soviet Executive Committee	
25 Sep	8 Oct	Trotsky elected president of Petrograd Soviet	For the first time the Bolsheviks were now able to persuade a soviet to adopt a vote of no confidence in the government.
6 Oct	19 Oct	Government formally dissolves Duma and State Council	
7 Oct	20 Oct	Pre-Parliament opened by Kerensky	Convened by order of the Democratic Conference, the Pre-Parliament included 66 Bolsheviks, 60 Mensheviks, 120 Social Revolutionaries, and 308 other leftists. After a denunciatory statement by Trotsky, the Bolsheviks walked out of the meeting.
9 Oct	22 Oct	Lenin visits Petrograd in disguise	Lenin had fled to Finland after the attempted July coup to avoid arrest.
10 Oct	23 Oct	Bolshevik Central Committee approves idea of armed revolt	Only Zinoviev and Kamenev voted against the plan. The meeting also approved the formation of a seven-man Politburo, which was destined to become the repository of all power within the Communist Party.

October 1917

<u>Date (Old Style)</u>	<u>Date (New Style)</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
11 Oct	24 Oct	Kamenev-Zinoviev letter	The letter, which protested the decision in favor of armed insurrection, was circulated by its authors to all Bolshevik organizations.
13 Oct	26 Oct	Petrograd Soviet forms Revolutionary Military Committee	Under Trotsky as president, the new Committee at once succeeded in taking over control of the Petrograd garrison.
16 Oct	29 Oct	Bolshevik Central Committee reaffirms decision of 10/23 October	The committee also set up a five-man committee to organize the insurrection.
16 Oct	29 Oct	Kamenev resigns from Central Committee in protest	
18 Oct	31 Oct	The Kamenev letter	On behalf of himself and Zinoviev, Kamenev published a letter in <u>Novaya Zhizn</u> in which he declared himself <u>opposed to any</u> armed insurrection.
			<u>November 1917</u>
21 Oct	3 Nov	Petrograd Soviet recognizes Revolutionary Military Committee as commander of the Petrograd Garrison	As president of the committee, Trotsky assured the appointment of Bolshevik sympathizers as commissars to all military units and key positions.
23 Oct	5 Nov	Revolutionary Military Committee takes over Petrograd garrison	
24 Oct	6 Nov	Bolsheviks make final preparations for revolt	
25 Oct	7 Nov	The October Revolution; the Bolsheviks assume power	The end of the light of freedom and the beginning of the dark of Communist rule.

SOURCES

- Bunyan, James, Intervention, Civil War, and Communism in Russia, April-December 1918, Baltimore, 1936.
- Bunyan, James, and Fisher, H. H., The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-1918, Stanford, 1934.
- Carr, Edward, The Bolshevik Revolution, 3 vols., London, 1950.
- Chamberlain, William, The Russian Revolution, 2 vols., London, 1935.
- Curtiss, John S., The Russian Revolution of 1917, Princeton, 1957.
- Eichenbaum, V.M., Nineteen-Seventeen: The Russian Revolution Betrayed, New York, 1954.
- Gankin, Olga, and Fisher, H.H., The Bolsheviks and the World War, Stanford, 1940.
- Gorky, Maxim, et al, History of the Civil War in the U.S.S.R., 2 vols., New York, 1947.
- Mazour, Anatole, Russia Past and Present, New York, 1951.
- Rauch, Georg von, A History of Soviet Russia, New York, 1957.
- Schapiro, Leonard, The Origin of the Communist Autocracy, London, 1955.
- Sukhanov, N.N., The Russian Revolution 1917, London, 1955.
- Timasheff, Nicholas, The Great Retreat, New York, 1946.

PROLOGUE TO INFAMY: A CHRONOLOGY OF COMMUNISM'S FIRST YEAR OF POWER

August 1957

DOCUMENT NO. 1
NO CHANGE IN CLASS X
DECLASSIFIED
CLASS CHANGED TO: TS 2
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 01/11/2022
APR 16 1970 2
JAN 01 1981 REVIEWER: 011922
DATE: 01/11/2022

PROLOGUE TO INFAMY: A CHRONOLOGY OF
COMMUNISM'S FIRST YEAR OF POWER

November 7, 1957 will mark the 40th anniversary of Communist rule in Russia. Already the Soviet propaganda machine has begun to spew forth reams of material in connection with that event, most of it designed to point up the "miraculous" changes for the better which the Communists have succeeded in effecting in Russia during their years of power.

Communist propaganda, both in general and that currently being issued, implies, if it does not explicitly claim, that the advent of Communism in 1917 was the result of unanimous demand and support by the peoples of the areas which today constitute the Soviet Union; that immediately upon their assumption of power, a veritable paradise on earth was created which has, since then, constantly increased in perfection.

The truth is, however, that in November 1917 the Communists (or Bolsheviks as they were then called) were but a small minority who imposed its rule by force; that the peoples of vast sections of Russia hated Communism and resisted the Communists to the limits of their ability; that almost all of the non-Russian peoples of the Russian Empire attempted to exercise the right of self-determination (which the Bolsheviks hypocritically had promised to recognize) and to establish independent states, only to have their efforts suppressed by Red Army aggression; that Russia, far from becoming a paradise, was converted into one huge jail which was the scene of warfare, tyranny, famine, insurrection and carnage.

About 350 years ago, Shakespeare wrote in one of his plays, The Tempest, that "what is past is prologue," meaning that the past actions of a nation are an indication of what it will do in the future. In view of the Communists' 40-year record of unparalleled despotism, aggression, bad-faith, cruelty and hypocrisy, there can be no doubt that these same elements will characterize Soviet actions in the future. The maxim is equally valid when projected backward in time. That is, the record of the Communists during their first year in power provided a reliable indication of what was to follow during the ensuing 39 years. The illegality, treachery, bad-faith, aggression and tyranny practiced by the Communists in 1917-1918 was but the prologue to 39 more years of the same which differed only in detail and degree but not in essence, as the attached chronology will show.

November 1917

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
7 November	Bolsheviks seize power	The Bolsheviks seized power by force and have ever since relied on force to remain in power. Force is also the basis of every other Communist regime which exists today. Communists have never yet been able to persuade any people to accept Communism willingly.
8 November	Land confiscation decree	The decree was designed to win peasant support. It ordered confiscation of large landholdings and their distribution to peasants, and specifically left untouched holdings of "cossacks, soldiers, and simple peasants." Later, the Communists confiscated all land and decreed collectivized farming in spite of this decree.
9 November	Freedom of the press curtailed	The Communists did not want the Russian people to know the truth, so they enacted the first measure to make the entire Russian press subservient to the Communists.
11 November	Anti-Bolshevik uprising of Petrograd cadets	This was the first of many attempts by various groups to prevent the Communists from consolidating power.
11 November	Vikzhel (All-Russian Executive Committee of the Union of Railway Workers) demands a coalition government	An important sector of Russian workers indicated that they did not view Communist rule as a blessing.
15 November	Soviet government issues Declaration on the Rights of Nationalities	The declaration specifically recognized the right of non-Russian peoples to secede from Russia if they so desired. But when they attempted to use this right, the Communists ruthlessly suppressed the various national movements.
17 November	Confiscation of all private printing presses and stocks of paper	Another move towards gagging the Russian press.

November 1917Date Event Significance

20 November Ukrainian National Council (Rada) proclaims Ukrainian National Republic

The Ukrainians were the first people to attempt to exercise the right of self-determination. But the Communists kept the Ukraine in the Soviet Union by force.

25 November Elections to the Constituent Assembly

This was the first and only free election ever held in Russia since the Revolution. The Communists obtained less than one-fourth of the votes and only 175 out of 707 seats.

27 November Workers' control of industry introduced

The Revolution had allegedly been carried out primarily for the sake of the industrial workers (proletariat), and this was a gesture to the workers. But in less than a year, party bureaucrats had assumed complete control of all economic life, and the workers had been reduced to the status of slaves of the Communist state, which they still are today.

December 1917

1 December Suppression of all non-Bolshevik newspapers except Maxim Gorky's Novaya Zhizn and the Socialist Revolutionary Party organ Dolya Naroda

The third step in bringing the entire press under Communist control. The Communists knew that there was so much to criticize in their regime that they did not dare to permit the existence of uncontrolled newspapers.

6 December Finland declares its independence

The second non-Russian people to show its dislike of Communism through exercise of the right of self-determination.

7 December Lenin and Stalin issue their Appeal to the Muslims of Russia and the East

The declaration promised the Muslims that they would be free to choose their own government and promised that in the Soviet Union all their customs and traditions would be respected. But

December 1917

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
7 December (cont)		

- throughout the 40 years of Soviet power, Islam has been persecuted, mosques have been destroyed or desecrated, and Muslims prevented from performing most of their religious duties. The declaration was one of the most blatant examples of Communist hypocrisy and duplicity.
- The Crimean Tatars were the first Muslim people of Russia to refute Lenin's claim that Communism was heralded unanimously by all the peoples of Russia.
- Crimean Kurultai (Constituent Assembly), which had opened at Bakhchisarai on 26 November, appoints 5-man directory as government of Crimean Tatar Republic
- Fourth Regional Muslim Congress at Kokand proclaims territorial autonomy of Turkestan
- Lithuanian Diet proclaims independence of Lithuania
- Armistice signed at Brest-Litovsk
- Invitation to join Bolshevik movement rejected by Tsalikov, leader of the Kazan Muslims, because of Red mistreatment of minorities.
- Soviet ultimatum to the Ukrainian Rada
- Establishment of the Supreme Council of National Economy
- The Soviets had requested the Germans for an armistice and agreed to immediate peace negotiations.
- The declaration of 7 December did not delude Russian Muslims into putting faith in the Communists.
- This was the first clear indication that the Soviet promise to recognize the right of self-determination was nothing but a hypocritical attempt to secure support for the Bolsheviks.
- This was one of the first measures designed to bring every phase of Russian economy under party control.

December 1917

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
20 December	Cheka established	Before the Revolution, abolition of the Okrana had been a principal feature of the Bolshevik program. The Communists did indeed abolish the Okrana, but now they established their own secret police organization, the Cheka (later known as the OGPU and NKVD), which from the beginning was many times worse than the Okrana had ever been.
22 December	Peace negotiations begin at Brest-Litovsk	On 7 December the Soviets had promised to leave Muslim institutions and customs unaffected. Now Muslim schools, an integral part of the Muslim community, were confiscated.
24 December	Soviet Commissariat of Education assumes control of church seminaries and other schools and their property	
26 December	Kazak-Kirghiz establish government of Alash-Orda at Semipalatinsk	
27 December	Nationalization of banks	This was a major element in the Bolshevik promise for a classless society. But compare the present Red Army with its imposing rank system, gaudy uniforms, and bemedalled generals and marshals.
30 December	Army ranks and titles abolished	
31 December	Civil marriage and divorce decree; church ceremonies for same decree invalid	This constituted a serious attack by the Communists on the sanctity of the family. It was a violation also of the pledge made to Muslims, for Islamic law requires that marriage and divorce of Muslims be executed according to religious forms.
31 December	Byelorussian Congress dispersed by Bolsheviks	The Communists were certain that the Congress would vote for Byelorussian independence, therefore they forcibly dispersed the Congress before it could take any action.

January 1918Significance

Date	Event	Significance
5 January	Obligatory Red Guard service decreed for Petrograd proletariat	The decree was a clear indication that the Bolsheviks had failed to win a sufficient following to enable them to recruit on a voluntary basis the military force they needed to stay in power.
12 January	Latvia proclaims its independence	
18 January	Constituent Assembly opens	
19 January	Constituent Assembly dissolved by Bolsheviks	The first vote taken by the Assembly was a defeat for the Communists, therefore they dissolved it. It spelled an end to any chance for democracy in Russia, for ever since that time the Communist Party, not the people, has exercised all power.
22 January	Declaration of Ukrainian independence by Ukrainian Rada	
23 January	Subordination of trade unions to the Soviet government	Trade unions are everywhere the protectors of the rights of labor. But by the present decree, the Communists converted them into an appendage of the Communist Party.
23-31 January	Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets meets in Petrograd	The Congress issued a Declaration on the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited Peoples, another meaningless statement since the Bolsheviks in actuality recognized no rights for anyone which did not serve to consolidate their own exclusive control.
28 January	Sovnarkom (Council of People's Commissars) decrees organization of the Red Army	
31 January	Enactment of the Law on Land Socialization	This was the unequivocal betrayal of the peasants since the law provided that henceforth <u>all</u> land belonged to the state without exception.

February 1918

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
5 February	Separation of church and state	Another step in the campaign to impoverish and discredit religion. Since this date, religious freedom in the Soviet Union has meant freedom of anti-religious propaganda.
8 February	Red forces occupy Kiev, depose and suppress the Ukrainian Rada	A flagrant example of Communist aggression and violation of the pledge to recognize the right of self-determination.
10 February	Cancellation of all Russian financial obligations	International law provides that every state must honor its international obligations, including debts, even though the form of government of the state has undergone a fundamental change. This was but the first of many examples of Communist contempt for the requirements of international law.
11 February	Muslim-Bolshevik conflict begins in Kokand	
12 February	Bolshevik forces bombard Muslim quarter of Kokand	
17 February	Ukrainian Rada asks German help against Soviet invasion	
19 February	Red forces storm Old City of Kokand	The capture of the Old City was followed by three days of pillage and massacre, after which the Communists burned the town. This is a good example of Communist indifference to the laws of humanity and war. What they cannot control they prefer to destroy.
19 February	Soviet government agrees to terms of Brest-Litovsk treaty	
22 February	Kokand Muslims forced to acknowledge authority of Tashkent Council of People's Commissars	The Communists used this agreement as proof that Turkistan's Muslims wanted to remain in the Soviet Union, pretending that it had been given voluntarily.

March 1918

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
3 March	Treaty of Brest-Litovsk signed	
10 March	Soviets ratify Treaty of Brest-Litovsk	
12 March	Government and party headquarters moved to Moscow	From this time on the Kremlin became the symbol of Communist tyranny and oppression.
14 March	Bolshevik attack on Bukhara	The Red forces under Kolesov were defeated by local patriots and were compelled to retreat to Tashkent on 18 March.
15 March	Fourth All-Russian Congress of Soviets approves Treaty of Brest-Litovsk	
25 March	Byelorussian Declaration of Independence	By 1 January 1919, invading Communist forces had seized control and Byelorussian independence came to an end.

April 1918

2 April	Sovnarkom decrees compulsory exchange of commodities for grain	Peasant resistance to Communist measures led them to withhold crops, so the Communists took coercive measures to solve the serious food shortage that had arisen.
2-5 April	Baku Muslims massacred by Armenian Dashnaks under direction of Ispolkom (Executive Committee of the Baku Soviet)	Because the Baku Muslims were strongly anti-Communist, the Soviets, as they had done in Kokand, chose to destroy what they could not control.
22 April	Transcaucasian Republic proclaims its independence.	The Communists had condemned the "slave" economy under the Tsars. Now they themselves introduced forced labor. Since this time no Russian worker has been free to choose his own job but has had to work where the government orders. The Soviets later expanded the system to create a real slave labor force under OGPU (later NKVD) direction.
22 April	Entire adult population of the Soviet Union made liable for compulsory military and labor service	

April 1918Date Event Significance

22 April Foreign trade nationalized
 Reds arrest members of Kazan Shura
 (Assembly) who voted for autonomy

The Kazan Tatars were another Muslim people who attempted to exercise the right of self-determination only to meet with Communist suppression.

25 April Officers of All-Russian Muslim Movement arrested in Ufa

CEC (All-Russian Central Executive Committee) abolishes right of inheritance

Another violation of the 7 December pledge not to disturb Muslim customs and traditions, since for Muslims inheritance is a matter regulated by religious law.

27 April Don Voisko Republic established

The Cossacks of the Don were not basically opposed to remaining a part of Russia, but they most emphatically did not wish to be part of a Russia ruled by the Communists.

May 1918

9 May CEC decrees food dictatorship; establishes system of forced food deliveries

Communist rule had resulted in famine conditions by May 1918. To solve the problem, the government instituted compulsory food delivery quotas for peasants without regard for the fact of whether or not the quota left the peasant with enough food for his own needs. This quota system resulted in the starvation of millions of peasants during the collectivization drive in the 1930's.

11 May Delegates to the Don Krug (Assembly), meeting in Novocherkassk, elect General Krasnov as Ataman (Chief Executive)

11 May North-Caucasian Federation declares its independence

16-19 May Red Army revolt at Saratov

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
<u>May 1918</u>		
17 May	Civil war begins in the south	The hollowness of Communist claims of widespread support among the people of Russia is shown by the many attempts of various peoples to secede as well as by the existence of civil war and revolts among its own conscripted military forces.
20 May	CEC declares war on kulaks	To turn peasant attention from violations of promises made to the peasants by the Communists, the government attempted to arouse the wrath of poorer peasants against their richer or more successful colleagues.
23 May	Conference of factory-shop delegates at Moscow calls for strike against government, denounces latter's mistaken policies and terroristic policies.	This action, supported also by the Congress of Railway Workers, demonstrated that the Communists did not command the support even of large sectors of the working class.
26 May	Transcaucasian Federation dissolved Georgia proclaims its independence	Although the Soviet government at first signed a treaty with Georgia which recognized the latter's independence, Communist forces later invaded the country and forcibly reincorporated it into the Soviet Union. The same fate also befell Georgia's sister republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan.
29 May	Sovnarkom declares martial law in Moscow	If the Communist regime was as warmly welcomed by the people as the Communists allege, it is hard to understand why the government found it necessary to institute martial law in the very capital of the country.
29 May	Supreme Revolutionary Tribunal established by CEC	This was an extra-legal court set up to try people for the crime of being anti-Communist.
30 May	Sovnarkom issues an appeal to the Don and Kuban Cossacks for support; declares the Don region an integral part of the RSFSR	

June 1918

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
1 June	Crimean Tatar government formed at Sevastopol	
5 June	Don Cossacks reject Sovnarkom appeal; proclaim an independent Republic	This was not an exercise of the right of self-determination but attempts by patriotic Russians to establish a representative government to oppose the usurping Communist regime.
8 June	Anti-Communist governments formed at Samara and Omsk	
11 June	Establishment of Committees of Poor Peasants to carry out grain seizures	Another Communist attempt to provoke internecline struggle among the peasantry and, at the same time, to help solve the increasingly serious food shortage.
14 June	Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries expelled from the CEC	Since this date, only Communist party members or sympathizers have been permitted to occupy any position of political power.
17 June	Anti-Communist insurrection at Tambov	
21 June	Supreme Revolutionary Tribunal decrees death sentence for Admiral Shchastnyi	This action occurred despite the fact that the Communists themselves had abolished the death penalty on November 8, 1917. The action illustrates Communist contempt for legal requirements, even those of laws they themselves have enacted.
22 June	Sovnarkom appeals to railway workers not to strike	
28 June	Nationalization of all large-scale industrial and commercial enterprises	
30 June	Murmansk Soviet rejects orders of Moscow regime	

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
June 1918		
30 June	Strikes or any form of work stoppage declared equivalent to treason	This resolution, adopted by the Communist-controlled Joint Conference of Factory-Shop Committees and Trade Unions, emphasized the now complete Communist control of the worker. The strike is everywhere the workers' most effective weapon for improving his lot. The Russian worker was henceforth compelled to accept the work conditions and wages decreed unilaterally by the Soviet government.
		<u>July 1918</u>
1-3 July	Peasant riots in Perm, Rzhev, and Tver	
4 July	Siberian Regional Duma, sitting at Omsk, proclaims Siberia an independent republic	
6 July	Insurrection in Moscow, Petrograd, Yaroslav and 23 other Central Russian cities	
8 July	Insurrection at Murom	
8 July	A Provisional Government of Autonomous Siberia proclaimed at Vladivostok	
10 July	Soviet commander-in-chief on the Volga front rebels against Bolsheviks	
10 July	First Soviet constitution adopted	Despite constitutional clause reaffirming right of self-determination and describing the Soviet Union as a voluntary union of peoples, the Communists continued to use force to prevent secessions.
12 July	Decree forbidding religious instruction in schools	

July 1918

Date	Event	Significance
16 July	Tsar and family murdered at Yekaterinburg	Additional evidence that the Com concerned with the welfare of t cared what he thought. All the of the worker was unquestioning Communist Party orders.
21 July	Conference of Workers Delegates at Moscow criticizes government's economic policies, which resulted in arrest of all members two days later	Russian sailors had originally most active revolutionaries, bu had realized the true character despotism.
31 July	Baku Soviet overthrown by Caspian sailors	
		August 1918
2 August	Anti-Communist government established at Archangel	
3 August	Decree of Agriculture Commissariat lays basis for completely planned agrarian economy	
4 August	Sovnarkom establishes food requisition cordons to facilitate compulsory food deliveries by peasants	
7 August	Workers of Izhevsk revolt against Bolsheviks	
20 August	CEC abolishes right to own any real estate of any kind	Previous decrees had stripped land. Now the Communists took his house.
27 August	Supplementary peace treaty with Germany signed	
30 August	Attempt on Lenin's life in Moscow; Uritsky, a Cheka official, killed in Petrograd	

DateEventSignificanceAugust 1918

31 August British Embassy at Petrograd raided by Cheka

The immunity of diplomatic quarters is one of the oldest and firmest established rules of international law. This raid by the Cheka demonstrated once again the Communist contempt for international law and the established rules of international relations.

September 1918

2 September 512 hostages shot by the Cheka in Petrograd

This was only the first of many large-scale massacres of innocent people by the Cheka and its successors. Who does not recall the NKVD murder of 4,000 Polish officers in Katyn Forest and of entire peoples (Chechen-Ingush, Crimean Tatars, Kalmyks, Balkars, etc.) during World War III?

3 September Unemployed forbidden to refuse work

Another link in the Communist enslavement of the Russian people.

5 September Sovnarkom legalizes use of terror

The Soviet regime, by this act, announced to the world that terror, murder, torture, and assassination formed an integral part of Soviet government policy. This policy has never been changed and is still in effect today.

14 September Baku captured by the Turks

October 1918

7 October Poles in Warsaw proclaim independence
8 October University law

Since enactment of this law, academic freedom has been unknown in the Soviet Union. No teacher is allowed to teach anything considered contrary to Communist doctrine or which would reveal the truth about anything as contrasted to the falsehood disseminated by the government and party.

October 1918

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
26 October	Sovnarkom orders 35.5 billions of rubles in banknotes printed	
30 October	Sovnarkom levies 10 billion ruble tax on remaining bourgeoisie	
30 October	CEC issues new decree on compulsory food deliveries by peasants	
31 October	New Sovnarkom decree on universal compulsory labor duty	

November 1918

4 November	All-Russian Provisional Government proclaimed in Ufa	This marked another attempt by non-Communist Russians to organize a government in opposition to the Soviet regime.
8 November	All-Russian Congress of Soviets demands end of Cheka excesses	The savagery of the Cheka was too much for even many revolutionaries to countenance. But by now the Congress of Soviets no longer possessed any real power, for the Communist Party was in complete control.
13 November	CEC repudiates Treaty of Brest-Litovsk	The Communists had petitioned the Germans for an armistice and then for a peace treaty, which they willingly had signed. Now they repudiated it. This was another example of Communists disregard of the norms of international relations. Soviet repudiation and violation of treaties solemnly entered into became commonplace especially since the end of World War II.
17 November	Crimean Tatar government finally suppressed	
21 November	Sovnarkom abolishes private trade	

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Significance</u>
		<u>November 1918</u>
22 November	Red Army units occupy Estonia, parts of Latvia and Lithuania	
		<u>December 1918</u>
5 December	CEC establishes Department of Soviet Propaganda	Estonia, as well as Latvia and Lithuania which were recognized two weeks later, retained their independence until 1940 when the Red Army occupied them and the three countries were forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union.
8 December	Sovnarkom recognizes independence of Estonia	
22 December	Independence of Latvia and Lithuania recognized	The Union was not Communist-controlled, therefore the Communists suppressed it. The teachers' union which has since taken its place is nothing but an obedient mouthpiece of the Communist Party.
23 December	CEC dissolves All-Russian Teachers Union	

SOURCES

- Bunyan, James, Intervention, Civil War and Communism in Russia, April-December 1918, Baltimore, 1936.
- Bunyan, James, and Fisher, H. H., The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-1918, Stanford, 1934.
- Carr, Edward, The Bolshevik Revolution, 3 vols., London, 1950.
- Degras, Jane, Calendar of Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, 1917-1941, London, 1948.
- , Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, Vol. I: 1917-1924, London, 1951.
- Gankin, Olga, and Fisher, H. H., The Bolsheviks and the World War, Stanford, 1940.
- Gorky, Maxim, et al., Histoire de la revolution russe, 4 vols., Paris, 1937.
- , History of the Civil War in the USSR, 2 vols., New York, 1947.
- Labry, Raoul, Une legislation communiste, Paris, 1920.
- Mazour, Anatole, Russia Past and Present, New York, 1951.
- Pipes, Richard, The Formation of the Soviet Union. Communism and Nationalism 1917-1923, Cambridge, Mass., 1954.
- Rauch, Georg von, A History of Soviet Russia, New York, 1957.
- Schapiro, Leonard, The Origin of the Communist Autocracy, London, 1955.
- Timasheff, Nicholas, The Great Retreat, New York, 1946.
- United States, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Trends in Russian Foreign Policy since World War I. A Chronology of Events from March 15, 1917 to January 1, 1947, prepared by the Legislative Reference Service, 80th Congress, 1st Session, Washington, 1947.